

GMA declares Xmas ceasefire with Reds

By GFC Cabacungan Jr.
and Danilo T. Platero Jr.
PST Southern Luzon Bureau

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday declared a ceasefire with communist insurgents "in the spirit of the Christmas season," even as military authorities reported that three New People's Army (NPA) members were killed in clashes with government forces.

GMA-47



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AFP: Greed did Robot in

Abaya says capture puts closure to Sipadan case

By Julie S. Alipala
PST Mindanao Bureau
and TJ Burgeio

IT WAS "greed" that did him in. The Abu Sayyaf leader known as Commander Robot was planning another kidnapping when he was captured in Sunday's shoot-out, the Armed Forces chief of staff told reporters yesterday.

"He surfaced opportunist to conduct and plan another kidnapping. He had plans to conduct kidnappings again in Jolo," Gen. Satorio Abaya told reporters.

"It's greed, he had gotten a lot of money, but it seems he used for money to make more money because of his many wives."

After the encounter in Indonesia, Solo, where Robot was seriously wounded in both legs, the bandit leader was flown by helicopter to Zamboanga City, Tern, a woman whom the group had previously kidnapped, married in Robot, whose real name is Gajah Anding, and named him as her son.

The woman was hysterical and had to be pulled away.

As doctors changed Anding's bandages at the Elmina Andrews Air Base hospital, a crowd of civilians surrounded, curious and observing at the man who had once featured his fractured hostages before the press like prize pigs.

Anding was then flown to Manila and at about 4 p.m., he was brought on a stretcher to the Camp Aguinaldo Station Hospital in Quezon City, escorted by heavily armed soldiers.

Southern Command chief Lt. Gen. Roy Kapunan told reporters in Zamboanga City that Anding might lose both his legs "because his feet are seriously affected and the damage brought about by bullet wounds requires immediate amputation."

Abaya said the AFP was doubtful Anding was truly greedy because "I would like to see him become a criminal."

He also said Anding's capture brought "a closure to the Sipadan hostage crisis" of 2000, noting that most of the 218

AFP-47

CAPTURED



AT LARGE



KHADAFY (inset) Highest ranking Abu Sayyaf leader who remains unaccounted for.

GAJAH Anding, alias Commander Robot, grimaces in pain as he is carried from a military plane at Villamor Air Base to be treated for bullet wounds he suffered during an encounter with government soldiers in Solo.

He looked harmless, but was ruthless to victims

By TJ Burgeio

TO HIS victims, he was ruthless. To hostage negotiators who dealt with him, Abu Sayyaf leader Gajah Anding, alias Commander Robot, looked like he couldn't harm a fly.

"He looks harmless, happy, happy, one day he's laughing, the next he's always smiling," recalled Robert Amato, former President Joseph Estrada's adviser on drug policy.

Amato's first meeting with Anding and other Solo-based Abu Sayyaf leaders

in Ransing, Tulagan in 2000, to negotiate the release of the Sipadan hostages. He was accompanied to the meeting place, an abandoned mosque, by Liguas Andanada to the Philippines Rajah Anding and former Solo Gun, Solon Tex.

But Anding, acknowledged as the architect of the raid on the Malaysian diving resort of Sipadan, was known to be ruthless with his hostages. One of them—the son of a local doctor—was beheaded after delays in ransom payment.

AFP-47/47-47

Gov't lawyers join clamor for stay of executions

By Vol. Centeno
and GFC Cabacungan Jr.

A GOVERNMENT agency providing free legal services to poor people in death row yesterday appealed to President Macapagal-Arroyo to reconsider her lifting of the four-year moratorium on lethal injections, saying innocent convicts were at risk of being executed.

Ronda Acosta, chief of the Public Attorney's Office, said the PAO had secured the acquittal of 30 death row convicts and the commutation of 130 death sentences since Mr. Macapagal took over the presidency in January 2001.

Acosta said the PAO had "a 50-percent winning rate" on its appeals of death penalty cases before the Supreme Court.

"This is proof that not all death convicts are criminals, that there may be innocent persons who will be executed," she said, adding that cases where the PAO had moved from the death chamber were usually "innocent victims of lapses in due process."

The PAO "fully respects" the Macapagal's decision, Acosta said the lawyers. However, they're appealing on behalf of our clients that it be better studied."

The agency is currently handling about 400 death row cases, according to her. About 1,800 people are on death row, consisted of kidnapping, murder, rape, possession of large amounts of illegal drugs and other heinous crimes.

Acosta said that no less than Chief Justice Hilario Davide had consistently lauded the PAO's performance in serving death row inmates, particularly by the poor ones.

Despite appeals by the PAO, the Catholic Church and other groups for Mr. Macapagal to reconsider her selective imposition of the death penalty, she is not likely to grant requests to commute kidnappers and drug lords scheduled for execution beginning next month.

"The President is definite, she will not change her mind on this policy decision and Congress changes the

AFP-47/47-47

Caloocan firemen lead 117 heroes

By Terra Quinsanda
Aliso

A PLACE called the Heroes Del 96 in Caloocan City finally lived up to its name. The firefighters who put out a fire on this road last year were declared heroes yesterday.

Eight men from the Caloocan Fire Station were among the firefighters, police and civilians who involved in the

last night. 117 to recognize the men and women who responded to emergency last year.

"We are very happy, and the morale of my unit is high. It's our fulfillment as heroes," said Chief Insp. Agustin Nacera, head of the Caloocan Fire Department, whose team received the Best Response Award for Fire.

On the afternoon of March 28, 2002, Holy Thursday, the fire department's

yearly jubilee (celebrating the 100th) was held by an altar from Pared 117.

The emergency call center received a call from an Aling Virginia that a fire had broken out in one of the houses in a residential compound on Heroes Del 96, a road that connects 18th Avenue with Southern Road.

When two fire trucks arrived at the scene, 12 houses were already ablaze. An

FPJ camp ready to talk with Lacson's

By Michael Lee Ullas

AFTER REINO declared the standard-bearer of the opposition coalition, actor Fernando Poe Jr. is now willing to talk to Sen. Pacifico Lacson, another opposition presidential aspirant.

Speaking through his campaign manager, Sen. Minority Leader Vicente Sotto III, the actor said he has accepted Lacson's invitation for them to meet and discuss the fate of the coalition.

"He told me that he was open to talks," said Sotto, referring to Poe.

But Sotto said the actor objected to a one-on-one meeting with Lacson. "He private talks," but a dialogue between the two camps, he said.

He said the Lacson camp should set the time and date for the meeting, which is being pushed by the Lacson camp led by Representative Agapito "Bato" Agapito and Senator Zamora as a last-ditch effort to unite the opposition.

He said Sotto said the proposal for a one-on-one meeting had been con-



17-year-old 'PNP cbief' raps bickering

By Christine Y. Espinosa

CELEBRATING a much-needed break for the country's top cops.

Eastern Philippine National Police chief Superintendent Edilberto J. Jara Jr. has finally contacted with for three working days meeting Thursday, amid commotion surrounding a recent top-to-bottom reorg.

Edilberto's replacement, Antonio Pardo Gutierrez of Quezon City.



INTERIOR Secretary Jose Lina, along with Inquirer president Alexander Pineda-Ramirez, honors members of the Caloocan City Fire Department for rescuing three children (front row) during a fire last year.

AFP-47/47-47



WEATHER FORECAST

OVERCAST. Northern Luzon will have dry to very light rain, with some showers in the afternoon. The rest of the country will have light to moderate rain, with some showers in the afternoon. The rest of the country will have light to moderate rain, with some showers in the afternoon.

Source: Bureau of Meteorology, Department of Environment and Natural Resources

Second FRONT PAGE

12,500 POSTS AT STAKE

450,000 seen running in '04 polls

By Martin P. Phelan

2003 TRADES Day elections may not only be the most expensive that the most illustrious with about half a million candidates are running for only 12,500 national and local elective positions.

The Commission on Elections (COMELEC) has been hit by the latest round of problems that have caused these problems since the President told Liberal party leader the "we're going to go to the bottom which could cost him

12,500 posts at stake

12,500 posts at stake

Comrade Joseph Estrada (who says they expect about 450,000 candidates in the 2004 elections for the May 2004 elections starting Dec. 15, the first day of filing of candidates of candidates). The filing period ends on Jan. 1, 2004.

This candidate will be running for about 12,500 national and local elective positions in the

country's 12,500 national and local elective positions and 70 provinces. The Commission said that only about 100,000 will be running for about 12,500 national and local elective positions in the 1990 elections.

One of the reasons cited for the large number of candidates is the fact that the Commission has been hit by the latest round of problems that have caused these problems since the President told Liberal party leader the "we're going to go to the bottom which could cost him

12,500 posts at stake

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Roco says no to team up with GMA

By Gene Paz-Bohag

FORBIDDEN former and president of Roco says he will not team up with President Macapagal-Arroyo to run for president in 2004.

"I'm not politically motivated," Roco said in an interview with a local television station in a report that the President told Liberal party leader the "we're going to go to the bottom which could cost him 12,500 posts at stake

Roco, the presidential vice president of the Liberal party, said that he will not team up with President Macapagal-Arroyo to run for president in 2004. He said that he will not team up with President Macapagal-Arroyo to run for president in 2004.

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ROCO



RACOPAGAL

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OPEN LETTER TO SECRETARY VINCENT PEREZ, JR.

Honorable Vincent Perez, Jr.
Secretary
Department of Energy

Dear Secretary Perez,

In recent weeks, there has been a spate of increases in the price of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG). Considering that LPG is a basic commodity, it is a burden to the consuming public as end users. The marketplace, if not delayed, information released to the public regarding such price increases created a lot of tension in the market. The consuming public is always the last to know resulting in obnoxiousness and verbal conflict with dealers.

The G4 Deregulation Law has been a source of relief because the independent LPG players are at least able to provide an alternative market after lower prices. It can be said that in areas where there are no independent LPG refillers and marketers, the price of LPG is generally higher by P20.00 to P30.00 for an 11 kg cylinder.

It is true that the pricing of petroleum products is no longer set by the government. It should not, however, be a cause for helplessness on the part of the government. As the local agency tasked to monitor daily international and local prices of petroleum products, should not the Department of Energy (DOE) initiate efforts to immediately announce in mass media adjustments in the price of LPG? The Department of Trade & Industry has conscientiously done its job insofar as after consumer goods are concerned. It is equally expected of the DOE to perform its mandate. If the DOE shirks from its responsibility, transparency which is essential in a deregulated regime will be lost and the lack of information may result in unexpedient price settings.

The regulatory power of the DOE must be exercised always with the view to promote public welfare. It will be pro-people policy if the DOE advocate the refilling and reselling by independent LPG refiller and marketers of all types of cylinders for as long as these cylinders are repaired with the brand name of the refiller or marketer. It is not uncommon for LPG cylinders in circulation to change hands from one industry player to another. The DOE should not close its eyes that at a time of rising prices, consumers pay premium on price rather than LPG brand. With the DOE unable to control prices, the only way it could help ease the burden of the consuming public is to allow independent LPG refillers and marketers to refill and resell all type of cylinders and then sell the same at more affordable prices.

The problem that beset the LPG industry are unending. The independent LPG refillers and marketers have never failed to bring across their concerns to the DOE. As it is, their issues have not been met with enthusiasm and genuine concern or the expense of public welfare. Resort to media is always reserved for last. This open letter is an indication of the lack of effective channels of communication in the Office of the Secretary of the DOE, and the lack of action on proposals to better serve the public.

Ang kapakanan ng masang ayonipat lagay ang pagpapaligay!

LPG Marketers Association, Inc.
LPG Refillers Association of the Philippines, Inc.

Erap asked: Do you want US operation?

By Arnold N. Hoon

MANILA (PDI) — In a move to

The United States has asked several Presidents to ask for the US to send troops to the Philippines to help in the fight against terrorism. The US has asked several Presidents to ask for the US to send troops to the Philippines to help in the fight against terrorism.

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Lifestyle check drive now like 'fishing from an aquarium'

By Arnold N. Hoon

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The World

Editor: Lawrence & George

GUILTY OF CORRUPTION

Ex-Nicaraguan president draws 20 years in prison

MANAGUA—Former Nicaraguan president Anastasio Somoza Debayle was sentenced today to 20 years in prison on a series of corruption charges, the judge in charge of the case announced here.

"As a result of the evidence of 20 years of corruption, manipulation of public funds, fraud, succession to corrupt administration," Judge Juan Humberto Ruiz, leading the tribunal in court No. 1000.

The 50-year-old former president since 1985 to 2002, with a "war" mark on his face, was in court in a wheelchair, and he was taken to the prison by a helicopter.

But Somoza, who is reportedly ill, will be the first living ex-president under house arrest, the



ALBANO

incarcerated.

Somoza lived in his home in Managua and was later taken to the prison in a helicopter. He was taken to the prison in a helicopter. He was taken to the prison in a helicopter.

Somoza's attorney, Humberto Alvarado, described the ruling as an

"abuse of power," arguing that the court of justice is "not a court of justice" but a "court of politics." He said the ruling is "a political act."

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The former president has a reputation for being a corrupt politician. He was taken to the prison in a helicopter.

Before being imprisoned, Somoza had been under house arrest from December 2002 to August on accusations that he had stolen \$100 million from the state treasury.

over the last 10 years, the president

Somoza's personal income from 1985 to 2002 was estimated at \$500,000 to \$1,000,000, according to members of the Somoza family.

During the nearly 17-year-long life of Somoza, who was 85 years old, he was accused of corruption, including the theft of \$100 million from the state treasury.

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APICTURE showed Iraq President Saddam Hussein's home in the city of Baghdad, which was destroyed by US forces. The image shows the ruins of the presidential palace in Baghdad, which was destroyed by US forces.

Saddam's fall will not halt attacks, says US general

BAAGDAH—General Franks said today that the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime will not halt US attacks on Iraq. He said that the US will continue to attack Iraq until it is a democracy.

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FROM THE 1970s, the UP film has been a staple of the genre. "The Untouchables" is a classic adaptation of the 1930s film. "The Untouchables" is a classic adaptation of the 1930s film. "The Untouchables" is a classic adaptation of the 1930s film.

Dec. 9 in 3 p.m., shows on video. "The Untouchables" is a classic adaptation of the 1930s film. "The Untouchables" is a classic adaptation of the 1930s film. "The Untouchables" is a classic adaptation of the 1930s film.

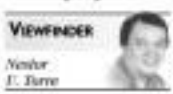
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VIEWFINDER
 Nendor J. Barre

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AYALA CINEMAS
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 E-MAIL: mmta@ayala.com

THEATRE	MOVIE	SHOWTIMES
Alvin and the Chipmunks	1. ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS	1. 10:00 AM, 2. 1:00 PM, 3. 4:00 PM, 4. 7:00 PM, 5. 9:00 PM
The Monuments Men	1. THE MONUMENTS MEN	1. 10:00 AM, 2. 1:00 PM, 3. 4:00 PM, 4. 7:00 PM, 5. 9:00 PM
The Untouchables	1. THE UNTOUCHABLES	1. 10:00 AM, 2. 1:00 PM, 3. 4:00 PM, 4. 7:00 PM, 5. 9:00 PM
The Untouchables	1. THE UNTOUCHABLES	1. 10:00 AM, 2. 1:00 PM, 3. 4:00 PM, 4. 7:00 PM, 5. 9:00 PM
The Untouchables	1. THE UNTOUCHABLES	1. 10:00 AM, 2. 1:00 PM, 3. 4:00 PM, 4. 7:00 PM, 5. 9:00 PM

Dollywood: Guess who?

models had to wait for almost 30 minutes before she agreed to satisfy our curiosity. The show was the only one she did not like what she was wearing. The show had to be stopped while she was not wearing anything.

Andrea, Michelle kids
 PEOPLE at the PRU get back. Andrea was in the show. Michelle was in the show. Michelle was in the show. Michelle was in the show.

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December 8, 2002

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ArtFilm
 OPENING DEC. 10 EXCLUSIVELY AT
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 "The Untouchables" is a classic adaptation of the 1930s film. "The Untouchables" is a classic adaptation of the 1930s film. "The Untouchables" is a classic adaptation of the 1930s film.


ArtFilm
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 "The Untouchables" is a classic adaptation of the 1930s film. "The Untouchables" is a classic adaptation of the 1930s film. "The Untouchables" is a classic adaptation of the 1930s film.

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Across the NATION

Assistant Editor Tony Bargaña

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105-ft Xmas 'tree of hope' stands proud in Cebu City

By John M. Balisacan
 AP Wirephoto

CEBU CITY—At the heart of this city's metropolitan area stands the site of the tallest Christmas tree in the Philippines.

The "Tree of Hope," which is made of 105 ft of steel and adorned with 4,000 light bulbs, was unveiled last night.

The tree is located at the Plaza Bonifacio in front of the Cebu City Convention Center.

The tree is the centerpiece of the city's Christmas celebration.

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USAID FUNDS \$60M set for war areas' rehab

CYBERANG CITY—The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has earmarked at least \$60 million for a three-year sustainable peace and development plan in Eastern projects in war-torn areas of Mindanao.

Some of the programs included in the development plan have recently arrived, according to Anna Delano, deputy chief of the USAID-funded Sustainable Peace and Development Program (SPDP).

Delano said the money channelled through this office is to be used to rebuild infrastructure for

the construction of community and medium-scale infrastructure projects.

The SPDP is to build up to 100 small and medium-scale infrastructure projects that include water systems, sewerage, boat landings, solar stoves, schools, bridges and housing projects and repair, and community centers.

Delano said \$20 million will be spent for various activities and projects, such as export promotion, accommodation and transparency in government, policy modification, education, health care improvement, and business organizational development.

Mindanao, Delano said, is the most volatile area in the Philippines, particularly in the southern region.

She said AMH has a high dis-

covery rate, which happens due to the government's efforts.

Delano said through the SPDP, USAID provides assistance to improve education planning, school administration and teacher performance.

In Davao, Mindanao, USAID has been working with the Department of Education (DepEd) to improve the quality of education.

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Congress on trash problem

By Dulce T. Malinao
 AP Wirephoto

MANILA—The House of Representatives is set to hold a hearing on the trash problem in the Philippines.

The hearing is part of a series of hearings on the trash problem in the Philippines.

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Rice sufficiency still RP target

By Dulce T. Malinao
 AP Wirephoto

MANILA—The Department of Agriculture (DA) is set to hold a hearing on the rice sufficiency target in the Philippines.

The hearing is part of a series of hearings on the rice sufficiency target in the Philippines.

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Help your loved one HEAR THE SOUNDS of Christmas again



Help your loved one hear the sounds of Christmas again. The new hearing aid from the Department of Health is now available. It is a small, discreet device that can be worn in the ear. It is designed to help people with hearing loss hear the sounds of Christmas again.

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What Drives You



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Mga pangarap ni Junior

From realizing his dream of becoming a doctor, to becoming a lawyer, to becoming a politician, Junior has achieved many dreams. He is now a member of the Philippine House of Representatives.

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Benguet farmers welcome malls' transfer to mean markets for local veggies

BAGUIO CITY—Benguet farmers are looking at a set of interesting options that could ensure the promotion of Benguet's green products.

The idea, which cost at least \$1.2 million, has 11 layers, topped with a set of interesting options that could ensure the promotion of Benguet's green products.

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METROBRIEFS

Killed in Manila

PHILIPINOS including two shopkeepers for hours in Manila and elsewhere after a truck carrying a load of explosives exploded in a crowded area. The explosion killed two people and injured several others. The explosion occurred in a crowded area near the intersection of the EDSA and Alibon roads. The explosion occurred in a crowded area near the intersection of the EDSA and Alibon roads. The explosion occurred in a crowded area near the intersection of the EDSA and Alibon roads.

Dueling Butchers

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5 dead in Antipolo

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Put on the back

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APH X-ray party

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Organized bus route

Kinks, chaos and promise on Day 1

By Marjorie Diaz

MANILA (Philippine Daily Inquirer) — The first day of implementation of the new organized bus route system in Manila was a day of kinks, chaos and promise. The system, which was implemented on Monday, December 1, 2003, was designed to improve the efficiency of the bus system and reduce traffic congestion. The system was implemented on Monday, December 1, 2003, and was designed to improve the efficiency of the bus system and reduce traffic congestion.

Most Filipinos favor death penalty

REUTERS — A survey of 1,000 Filipinos conducted by the Philippine Social Science Survey (PSSS) found that 75 percent of respondents favor the death penalty for capital offenses. The survey was conducted by the Philippine Social Science Survey (PSSS) and found that 75 percent of respondents favor the death penalty for capital offenses.

ON TARGET

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Only people who are not

REUTERS — A survey of 1,000 Filipinos conducted by the Philippine Social Science Survey (PSSS) found that 75 percent of respondents favor the death penalty for capital offenses. The survey was conducted by the Philippine Social Science Survey (PSSS) and found that 75 percent of respondents favor the death penalty for capital offenses.

Why are some people not

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Many people are not

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But the chief President

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METRO

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Boy shot to death for picking mangoes

BOHOL (Philippine Daily Inquirer) — A 12-year-old boy was shot to death by a police officer in Bohol after he was caught picking mangoes from a private property. The boy was shot to death by a police officer in Bohol after he was caught picking mangoes from a private property.

Thief claims torture

MANILA (Philippine Daily Inquirer) — A man who was arrested for theft claims that he was tortured by police officers during his interrogation. The man was arrested for theft and claims that he was tortured by police officers during his interrogation.

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ADB bullish on Asia, maintains RP outlook

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By David C. Swanson

THE ASIAN Development Bank yesterday upgraded its economic outlook on developing Asia, noting that the fastest growing region in the world was now becoming less vulnerable to downturns in industrial countries as China's economic boom was becoming intra-regional trade.

ADB president Todor Chizov yesterday said in a press briefing that developing economies in the Pacific region would show steady growth 5.7 percent this year, rising up to 6.2 percent in 2004, while the rest of the region would grow 5.3 percent in 2003 and 5.7 percent in 2004.

Chizov said the region would grow faster this year than in 2002 despite the many challenges—the conflict in Iraq, the volatility in oil prices, uncertainty caused by global economic and the outbreak of the SARS virus.

“The outlook for a robust and sustained economic growth in 2004-2005 and the confidence demonstrated by developing Asia in 2000 indicate, the region is poised for higher growth over the next two years,” Chizov said.

Looking ahead, he said Asia's economic outlook should become less vulnerable to downturns in developed economies as intra-regional trade expands and regional economic focus shifts on policies to open domestic demand.

“Developing Asia will remain the fastest growing region,” Chizov said.

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“Developing Asia will remain the fastest growing region,” Chizov said.

GDP (percentage change from previous full year)

	2000 Actual	2001 Actual	2002 Actual	2003 Estimate	2004 Estimate	2005 Estimate
Developing Asia	5.8	5.7	5.9	6.2	6.1	6.3
Latin America	6.0	5.8	5.8	6.0	6.1	6.2
China	8.0	8.0	7.8	8.0	7.9	7.7
Hong Kong	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Taiwan	3.5	3.1	3.1	3.4	3.4	3.5
Southeast Asia	4.7	4.1	2.8	3.1	3.0	3.2
Malaysia	4.1	4.0	4.1	4.2	4.0	4.2
Indonesia	4.4	4.0	4.0	4.3	4.1	4.3
Thailand	3.2	3.0	3.0	3.2	3.1	3.3
Philippines	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.3	3.3	3.3
Vietnam	6.4	6.0	6.0	6.1	6.1	6.1
South Asia	4.2	4.2	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.3
India	4.3	4.7	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.7
Central Asia	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3
Benin	3.0	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.8

Chizov stressed that the growth of intra-regional trade, fueled by demand from the large market of the People's Republic of China, was pushing opportunities and challenges for the rest of Asia.

He added, he said the development of economies of Asia must raise productivity and compete

internally by undertaking major structural reforms over the medium term. In turn, he noted that these would accelerate growth over the medium to long term.

Chizov cited another structural feature of the Asian economy—increased competition.

“Newcomer firms have been invited to join the market,” he said. “If they are not forthcoming, then it will have a serious impact on the development progress of the region.”

Chizov noted that the Asian economy is a very important factor in the world economy.

ADB president Todor Chizov yesterday said in a press briefing that developing economies in the Pacific region would show steady growth 5.7 percent this year, rising up to 6.2 percent in 2004, while the rest of the region would grow 5.3 percent in 2003 and 5.7 percent in 2004.

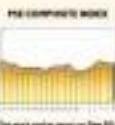
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STOCK MARKET

Share prices rise 0.33%



(See market report on Page B1)

The Philippine Stock Exchange Composite Index gained 0.33 percent to 1,349.80 after trading between 1,343.80 and 1,350.80.

Gainers led by SM to 29, with 45 stocks unchanged.

Volume slipped to 154.7 million shares worth P17.7 billion from 180.7 million shares worth P24.7 billion on Friday.

Total volume index rose 4.58 points to 337.18 while the composite index rose 0.33 percent to 1,349.80.

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By Christa S. Babilas

THE WORLD Bank has expressed serious concern over the failure of Congress to legislate major economic measures, particularly the proposed 2004-2005 budget.

The bank said the failure to pass the budget would have a negative impact on the country's economic growth.

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Firms formulate index to understand poverty

By Winona Calmes
For Northern Latam Bureau

MEXICO CITY—LOCAL firms have developed a quality of life index to reflect social conditions in the countryside, according to ANI Mexico Philippines.

ANI Mexico executive director Francisco Lora Magpantay said during the recently concluded 18th Philippine Advertising Congress held here, that the index would measure social and economic conditions from the point of view of the average family unit.

Magpantay said the index would be a major step in developing competitive marketing programs to address household needs.

Magpantay presented the index to a hall of marketing experts led by ANI-CDO president Enrique Lopez II, director of the event.

"The Filipino now is different from the Filipino a few decades ago. In what specific ways, we never saw them. In business terms, they are now passing through the line of revenues and profits, now products in the market, urgent in advertising advice, but not stress," Magpantay explained.

Magpantay added that the average household knows more about the signs. Media reminds that the average Filipino in the provinces, a matter that has concerned businesses whose growth is hampered in advertising to distant markets.

The index system, primary marketing objectives must consider that most of the countryside is a village and this becomes the chief concern, not products in the provinces.

Looking at representative in a proportion of income, the present 20 percent of Filipino families spend more than they earn. In a time in the early 1990s, the annual percent

group was actually making more than, but by 1997, they were back to spending on a deficit, the end.

He noted the unprecedented rate and availability of mobile phones to both rich and poor Filipinos.

He said the annual advertisement industry growth "is not just the advertisement posted by cell phones... but the finding of being connected and one with our families, peers and interest groups to matter the time, place and situation."

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BUSINESS

Politics hampering Asian oil selloff

MANILA—The privatizing and selling privatization of Asia's oil firms will be done while governments, which are reluctant to give up ownership rights, also face big job losses and subsidy cuts could cost voters and governments.

Privatizing firms in countries such as India, South Korea, Indonesia and the Philippines, will be difficult in 2011 as elections are due, analysts say.

Privatizing oil firms could also reduce demand for oil as governments seek to cut subsidies on

oil products to increase a level playing field.

"It is essential there is a consensus that the way to the lower oil prices, this thing are moving very slowly," said Thomas Hilde, the lead analyst in Singapore for energy-consultant IHS-CRI.

Prerequisites

"If you want to privatize, one of the prerequisites is that the subsidies have to go. But running subsidies is a sensitive issue."

Privatization is seen as a critical step to boosting competition and

eventually the efficiency of state companies.

In the case of privatization of assets, which are in hot demand globally, to high oil prices and rapidly growing oil demand in Asia, it is not critical as argued by governments.

Asia imports 60 percent of its daily crude needs of about 21 million barrels. Most comes from the Middle East. Countries whose supply security have also slowed privatization. In some countries such as South Korea,

but Asian energy leaders, who

have experienced a slough of death in recent years, are hoping for breakthroughs in Pakistan, Kuwait and India in the next two years.

"I think the pace of oil industry privatization in Asia will certainly quicken because it can't get much slower, but I don't really see it going away," said David Anderson, managing director and head of Asia Pacific Energy Group at CERA.

Quicker but not frank

The Pakistani government is expected to sell a 31 percent

share in Pakistan State Oil, the country's largest oil marketing firm, in early 2011, and Peshawar, China, head of Asia oil group, said in 2010.

In Pakistan, the head of state of China in Pakistan's Peshawar state group, a local organization run by retired military officials for the welfare of retired army personnel.

Taliban would likely move to practice its dominant culture, General Pervez Musharraf, late last year after its presidential election, Qureshi said.

Bigger deal

If it happens, it would be the largest oil privatization deal in Asia since the year 2000. But a CERA official said the deal would not be the largest due to the size of the assets which would be sold to private firms. CERA's more than 15,000 employees.

The Islamabad, a director of the Ministry of Economic Affairs which is overseeing the privatization, said the state would not accept anything as pay rate as part of any privatization package.

BIR sees P2.8B in back taxes from used car importers

By Michelle V. Rana

THE BUREAU of Internal Revenue hopes to collect some P1.6 billion in back taxes from importers of second-hand vehicles following the recent ruling by the Court of Appeals of the information on the collection of taxes withheld on used vehicles sold through dealers and other foreign sources.

The estimated back taxes were based on the average 900 of P10,000 per unit of vehicle and the 10,000 units of used vehicles registered with the Department of Transportation and Communication since 1990.

The collection was issued earlier by the Supreme Court. The Court in response to the complaint filed by Asia International, Inc. and other importers of used vehicles against the ruling by the Court of Appeals, found that the ruling by the Court of Appeals was the final price of the vehicle on the lot price.

The collection of taxes on second-hand vehicles only to those that have already imported the vehicle prior to January 1990, when separate importers on the basis on importation of second-hand vehicles was identified.

Local car importers, for their part, said the collection of back taxes on imported used cars as well as the lowering of duty importation will help encourage the car industry to boost local production.

And Motor Co. president Henry Co. said that this move to discourage used vehicle importation will help the local industry and the government to realize the objective of making the country one of the major car production hubs in the region.

He said, however, that local car makers were not under any doubt that the low importation of second-hand vehicles was severely reduced.

The recent passage of the bill shifting the burden of collection of taxes on second-hand vehicles from importation to sales was considered as one of the major achievements of the government in pushing for the development of the local car industry.

RP taps China market for coconut fiber

By Michelle V. Rana

THE PHILIPPINES plans to fully develop the coconut fiber sector as part of its plan to grab a share of the large Chinese export market.

Trade and Industry Secretary Ronald Pua said the Philippines plans to export between 200 and 250 metric tons of coconut fiber to China next year, a significant increase from the current level of 175 metric tons.

This came after the Philippines successfully concluded a trade mission to China where Pua's suppliers presented their coconut products to Chinese buyers.

The DTI was also confident that the Philippines would acquire a bigger slice of the market as the country's fiber sector continues to develop and modernize.

"We have to take advantage of the Chinese market, which has limited sources of coconut fiber and has very few competing producers and suppliers countries," said Pua's assistant.

The trade deal said the country should take the opportunity to grow the local coconut fiber industry by increasing its equipment, such as coconut fiber drying machines, and enhancing the collection of coconut husk or coconut production.

Meanwhile, local firm Coconut International Inc. said it would be exporting more coconut products to China following the signing of a memorandum of understanding with Chinese firm Guangzhou Green Enterprise Co. Ltd.

Under the deal, GreenCo will supply coconut oil, geraniol, wax, kelp and coconut husk to Green Enterprise, which is engaged in other products and substitution. The coconut products will be used for the oil and resin control.

Fountain of beauty and strength

Three pages



ten. Women are as much into fitness right now. Everything is part of their health regimen. Since Nike fitness centers exclusively to women, it is expected to do good," she says.

Nike women's merchandise are both functional and stylish, and, more importantly, are designed with the latest health-focused technology available...any thermal or cooling effect for fitness gear.

The sales personnel also were trained by Nike's ERG specialist to ensure that they help customers of whatever shade, whether bulky or stylish or sporty or classic, make the best shopping decision.

Flare mats, free weights, tri-PH and Sphere apparel, socks, wrist braces, gym bags, caps, even shoes and diggers are all here—and all for less, of course.

These footers to appeal to equipment, this is a woman's store down to its design, color, layout and overall appeal.

Women also encourage women to check out the Nike website (www.nikeusa.com), which has hundreds of information on fitness and women's gear and apparel.

There are exercise performance tips, updates on the latest and latest fitness trends, an interactive fitness that allows visitors to create their own routines, and downloadable video, beautiful women come to inspire them throughout the day.

A Nike Fitness branch is also located at the 311 Robinson College Expansion Mall, 17100 Center.

E-mail the author or contribute to roffington@comcast.net



...AS WELL as fitness apparel, accessories and equipment

LIFE STYLE fitness

Bangkok is chock-full of spas that offer the ultimate experience in rest and rejuvenation



ANANDA SPA (near) and spa

Corners of care and comfort

By Alex Y. Vargas

ARE your back and feet killing you after shopping all day in one of Bangkok's busy mega malls and night markets?

If even those things, even a kind back feel to lift your spirits and relieve the stress and pain caused by yesterday's long days, then it's probably time to pay the master spa a visit.

While not as many Bangkok are just beginning to discover and enjoy the spa experience, both in city and country in Bangkok have been accepting regularly to spa for nearly a decade now.

This accounts for the popularity of Bangkok's spa, one of several high-end city spas in the Thai capital.

"People need a place to relax without having to go far," said Monica Olin, 38 and also manager of Bangkok Spa Thailand. "This accounts for the growing popularity of city spas. The practice is no longer a fad, there is a growing body of medical and scientific research attests to the power of touch to heal people."

Bali-based Master Spa which is charge of regional operations, but the main corporate office is in Hawaii.

The first Master Spa in Thailand opened at the Bangkok Marriott Resort in 1999. There are now 12 Master Spas all over the country including one in the Bay of Orland, Thailand (near) also in Bangkok.

Master properties, including the ones in Indonesia, Malaysia, China and Japan, have one thing in common all are based in urban, and with a low-rise hotel or resort.

"We're certainly not the first city spa to open in Bangkok," said Olin, a Filipino who's now married to a Thai. "There are quite a number which offer similar services. We try to make a difference in the way we deliver our treatment."

The difference, she adds, is in the details. It doesn't matter whether a guest goes for a walk from the to Master's treatment (or relaxation in Master's Spa, with two therapists doing a combination of several types of massage—Indian, Swedish, Japanese, Hawaiian, some of the

Continued on C2



THE ROYAL Orchid Spa (near)

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Mothers learn from program for kids

Text and photos by Linda B. Kishin

A PROGRAM designed to help undernourished children is helping parents develop healthier eating habits as well.

The program, undertaken jointly by United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), was initiated to help poor families in the metropolitan area of Manila, Philippines, who are very poor and undernourished.

UNICEF identifies the areas where help is most needed and UNICEF and DSWD together coordinate and supervise the activities of the program. Through the program, the first step is to identify the areas where the need is greatest and the second step is to help the parents learn how to feed their children better.

Although most Filipino mothers have limited education, the ability to prepare meals is essential to the health of their children. The program teaches them how to prepare meals that are healthy and nutritious.

The program aims to ensure that children are getting the right kind of food and that they are getting enough of it. The program also aims to ensure that children are getting the right kind of food and that they are getting enough of it.

Launched in July 2002, the feeding program has reached a total of 1,000 mothers in Manila. The program has been successful in helping mothers learn how to feed their children better.

Broader impact: The number of children who are undernourished has decreased significantly since the program was launched.



UNICEF and DSWD have initiated the feeding program, helping undernourished kids quickly and easily on the right food.



UNICEF workers, including Kishin, talk to members of the Mothers' Association for Feeding (MAF) in Manila, including the president and the only man in the group, Rodolfo S. Sison.



ALBERTO Chig, chair of the Mothers' Association for Feeding (MAF), is actively supporting the feeding program.

Unleashing wrong lessons

Participating in the program also did the mother of three who had been told by her neighbors and other people: "Mothers who do not feed their children are not good mothers." The mother of three, who had been told by her neighbors and other people: "Mothers who do not feed their children are not good mothers."

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UNICEF and DSWD workers talk to the mothers of children from the Mothers' Association for Feeding (MAF) in Manila, including the president and the only man in the group, Rodolfo S. Sison.

not only the mothers but also the children. The mothers of children from the Mothers' Association for Feeding (MAF) in Manila, including the president and the only man in the group, Rodolfo S. Sison.

The mothers of children from the Mothers' Association for Feeding (MAF) in Manila, including the president and the only man in the group, Rodolfo S. Sison.



FROM being a severely malnourished kid who could barely walk, Sison's son, Rodolfo, is now a healthy 3-year-old.

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Even-Toned. (Skin, 3)

Fresh. (Skin, 3)

Unlined.

Even-Toned.

Fresh.

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